

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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TAGS
SUBJECT: POPULATION-DISCUSSIONS WITH A MINISTRY OF HEALTH OFFICIAL

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY SCIENCE SECTION OFFICERS MET ON APRIL 5 WITH NEW SECRETARY FOR SPECIAL HEALTH PROGRAMS OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, MR. HUMBERTO TORLONI, TO DISCUSS SOME TOPICS RELATED TO POPULATION/FAMILY PLANNING. MEETING WAS VERY CORDIAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE AND REVEALED DR. TORLONI'S INTEREST IN INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS TO COOPERATE WITH THE USG IN SELECTING BRAZILIAN INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED TO RECEIVE TITLE X ASSISTANCE TAKING INTO CONSIDERATION THEIR CAPABILITY AND RELATION OF THEIR PROJECTS TO OFFICIAL GOB PROGRAM AND NEEDS. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING THE MEETING WITH ABOVE MENTIONED EMBASSY OFFICERS, DR. TORLONI REVEALED FULL AWARENESS OF TITLE X ASSISTANCE TO SOME BRAZILIAN PROJECTS IN FAMILY PLANNING AND EVEN OFFERED HIS ASSISTANCE IN HELPING THE USG SELECT CAPABLE BRAZILIAN INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR TITLE X ASSISTANCE AS WELL AS TYPES OF PROJECTS WHICH WOULD BEST SUIT BRAZIL'S NEEDS. FOR THIS PURPOSE DR. TORLONI PROPOSED WE ESTABLISH SYSTEM OF INFORMAL, UNOFFICIAL, NON-BINDING CONSULTATIONS. BESIDES PPGAR STAFF, TORLONI CAN DRAW ON ASSISTANCE OF BODY OF TECHNICAL CONSULTANTS IN AREA OF MATERNAL-CHILD CARE ATTACHED TO MINISTRY. HE ALSO REQUESTED
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LIST OF BRAZILIAN POP/FP PROJECTS WHICH ARE CURRENTLY RECEIVING TITLE X ASSISTANCE, AS WELL AS LIST OF PENDING REQUESTS FOR SUCH ASSISTANCE, SO THAT HE CAN HAVE A BETTER PICTURE OF USG ASSISTANCE TO BRAZIL IN AREA OF FAMILY PLANNING. EMBASSY POP OFFICER PROMISED TO PROVIDE HIM WITH SUCH A LIST AND NEEDS AID/POP OFFICE HELP TO PREPARE IT.

3. CONCERNING INTERNATIONAL AND FOREIGN ASSISTANCE TO BRAZIL IN AREA OF POPULATION, DR. TORLONI STATED THAT HE WAS RECENTLY TOLD THAT POPULATION COUNCIL WAS PREPARED TO ALLOCATE THREE MILLION DOLLARS FOR FAMILY PLANNING ACTIVITIES IN BRAZIL, AND EXPRESSED OPINION THAT IF SUCH ASSISTANCE WERE TO BE PROVIDED IT SHOULD BE CHanneled THROUGH INTERNATIONAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS PAHO OR THE WHO, TO REDUCE POSSIBILITY OF NEGATIVE POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS IN BRAZIL. (COMMENT: WE BELIEVE TORLONI ASSUMED SOURCE OF POPULATION COUNCIL FUNDS WAS USG AND WAS SAYING INDIRECTLY THAT HE WOULD PREFER TO SEE TITLE X FUNDING PROVIDED TO BRAZIL THROUGH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS UMBRELLA. EMBASSY DID NOT ENLIGHTEN TORLONI ON FUNDING SINCE SOURCE IS UNCLEAR TO US. END COMMENT).

4. ASKED ABOUT THE CURRENT GOB POLICY ON QUESTIONS SUCH AS VOLUNTARY STERILIZATION, IUD'S, ETC., DR. TORLONI REPLIED THAT THE GO DOES NOT YET HAVE AN OFFICIAL POSITION, BUT THAT THESE ISSUES ARE BEING STUDIED BY A SPECIAL COMMISSION APPOINTED BY THE MINISTER OF HEALTH FOR THAT PURPOSE. COMMISSION'S RECOMMENDATIONS ARE EXPECTED SOON. EMBASSY OFFICERS ASKED DR. TORLONI WHAT WOULD BE HIS VIEWS ON POSSIBLE TITLE X ASSISTANCE FOR BRAZILIAN PRIVATE INSTITUTION IN THE AREA OF TRAINING OF DOCTORS IN STERILIZATION TECHNIQUES. (FYI: THE EMBASSY OFFICERS HAD IN MIND PROPOSAL WHICH HAS BEEN SUBMITTED TO AVS BY DR. FERNANDO ESTELITA LINS, FROM RIO DE JANEIRO, REQUESTING ASSISTANCE FOR A PROPOSED PROJECT IN TRAINING OF DOCTORS IN LAPAROSCOPY AT HIS RECENTLY-CREATED PRIVATE CLINIC OF ENDOSCOPY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND GYNECOLOGICAL AUXILIARY SERVICES. ON NOVEMBER 11, 1977, DR. MARILYN E. SCHIMA, DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS OF AVS, REPLIED TO DR. LINS, SUGGESTING THAT HE CONTACT US EMBASSY FOR ORIENTATION. END FYI .)

DR. TORLONI DID NOT REACT NEGATIVELY, BUT STATED THAT HE WOULD PREFER TO DISCUSS THE CONCRETE CASE WITH THE EMBASSY BEFORE GIVING HIS OPINION. HE NOTED THAT BEFORE EXPRESSING HIS VIEWS HE WOULD LIKE TO BE SURE ABOUT DEDICATION AND CAPABILITY OF THE INSTITUTION, TYPE OF DOCTORS TO BE TRAINED, TYPE OF PATIENTS TO BE REACHED, ETC.

5. COMMENT: EMBASS BELIEVES TORLONI CLEARLY PLANS TO GET GOB MOVING ON POP PROBLEMS AND THAT HIS PROPOSAL CONSTITUTES DE FACTOR MECHANISM FOR COORDINATING USG POP/FP ASSISTANCE WITH OFFICIAL GOB PROGRAM WITHOUT FORMAL AGREEMENT AND CAN SERVE TO STIMULATE OFFICIAL PROGRAM AND MAKE USG ASSISTANCE MORE EFFECTIVE IN BRAZIL. MOREOVER, THE EMBASSY FEELS THAT INFORMAL CONSULTATION WITH MINISTRY ON TYPES OF PROJECTS TO BE ASSISTED BY TITLE X FUNDS WILL CONSIDERABLY REDUCE POLITICAL RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH FOREIGN ASSISTANCE TO FAMILY PLANNING IN BRAZIL. UNLESS POP OFFICE PERCEIVES ANY OBJECTION, EMBASSY PLANS TO MAKE MEASURED USE OF OFFER BY THE MINISTRY, CONSULTING IT INFORMALLY ON QUESTIONS WHICH MAY INVOLVE SENSITIVE ISSUES AND SIMPLY INFORMING MINISTRY IN LESS SENSITIVE AREAS SUCH

AS BEMFAM AND PUCC/CAMPINAS PROJECTS, EMBASSY PLANS TO DISCUSS DR.
LINS' PROPOSAL WITH DR. TORLONI, AS TEST CASE, TO VERIFY HIS REAL IN-
TENTIONS.
JOHNSON

NOTE BY OC/T: TELEGRAM DELAYED IN TRANSMISSION.

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